

NOTES ON SOME COSTA RICAN BIRDS.

BY

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For the privilege of examining and reporting upon a small but very interesting collection of birds from that remarkably prolific country, the author is indebted to the courtesy of the Director of the Costa Rica National Museum, Sr. Anastasio Alfaro.

With their usual liberality, the authorities of the above mentioned institution have presented all type specimens to the U. S. National Museum.

1. *Mimus gilvus* (Vieill.).

An adult example from El Zarcero (altitude about 7,000 feet), collected March 1, 1887, by Mr. José C. Zeledon, is apparently identical with the Colombian bird. Length (skin), 9.80; wing, 4.65; tail 4.95 (graduation, 1.30); exposed culmen, 0.78; tarsus, 1.35; middle toe, 0.90. White on inner web of outer tail feather 1.55 in extent along shaft. "Iris pale dirty yellow."

2. *Oreothlypis gutturalis* (Cab.).

A young female may be described as follows:

Young female (No. 2116, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Achiote, C. R., July 27, 1888; A. Alfaro): Above dull plumbeous-gray, with a triangular patch of black on the back, as in the adult; chin, throat, and chest pale dingy buff, the feathers grayish, white beneath the surface, their bases deeper grayish; rest of under parts whitish medially, grayish laterally.

3. *Eucometis cassini* (Lawr.).

Young (No. 3366, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Jiménez, C. R., August 10, 1889; A. Alfaro): Much duller in color than the adult, with none of the yellowish olive-green on top of the head, which is the same color as the back, with a very faint tinge of olive on the occiput; breast and sides merely tinged with olive-green, the middle line of the breast and belly being dull brownish buff, the under tail-coverts browner; forehead and lores less black than in the adult. Otherwise, the general coloration is similar to that of the adult.

4. *Platypsaris aglaiae obscurus*, subsp. nov.

SUBSP. CHAR: Adult male similar to that of *P. aglaiae hypophæus*,* but under parts darker anteriorly, the feathers of the throat and chest still darker centrally, producing an indistinct spotted or scaled appearance; first primary with a small white spot at base of inner web; adult female similar to that of *P. aglaiae latirostris*, but smaller.

Adult male (type, No. 121,331, U. S. National Museum, Jiménez, Costa Rica, February 4, 1891; Alfaro & Carraura): Pileum and hind neck glossy, slightly greenish, black, becoming dull sooty blackish on anterior portion of forehead and nasal plumes; rest of upper parts dark slate-color, approaching slate-black on the interseapular region, the edges of the remiges and greater wing-coverts more grayish slate; scapulars with a considerable part of their concealed portion pure white, showing wherever the feathers are disarranged. Under parts deeper slate-gray, somewhat darker anteriorly, where, on the throat and chest, each feather has a dusky slate central spot, producing a somewhat squamated appearance. Lores dull slate-gray, but ear-coverts glossy slate-black. Upper mandible black, lower dark plumbeous; legs and feet grayish black (plumbeous in life?). Length (skin), 5.65; wing, 3.50; tail, 2.50; exposed culmen, 0.62; tarsus, 0.80; middle toe, 0.55.

Adult female supposed to be this species, but possibly *P. latirostris*—(No. 131332, U. S. National Museum, Jiménez, Costa Rica, March 30, 1891; Anastasio Alfaro): Pileum dull slate-black, becoming dull brownish gray anteriorly; rest of upper parts clear rufous-tawny (a little darker than in *P. latirostris*), the tips and a considerable portion of inner webs of primaries dusky. Ear-coverts, sides of neck, sides, and flanks tawny-ochraceous (paler posteriorly); rest of under parts pale tawny-buff (gradually blending into the deeper color of the lateral portions), the chin almost white. Upper mandible black; lower mandible and feet plumbeous; iris very dark brown.† Length (skin), 6.00; wing, 3.25; tail, 2.40; exposed culmen; 0.62; tarsus, 0.80; middle toe, 0.50.

I at first identified this bird as *P. homochrous* (ScL.), but upon reëxamination find that it can not be that species, if correctly described and figured. *P. homochrous*, as described, is larger (length, 7.00; wing, 3.70; tail, 3.90), and lacks the dark spotting on the throat and chest, while the female has the pileum rusty, like the back, instead of conspicuously slate-blackish.

In these "Proceedings," Vol. v. p. 397, I referred a female *Platypsaris*, collected by Mr. C. C. Nutting at La Palma, on the west coast of Costa Rica, to *P. homochrous*, though expressing strong doubts as to the correctness of the identification. I am now convinced that the specimen in question is referable to *P. latirostris* (Bonap.), specimens of which, representing both sexes, were subsequently obtained by the same

* See these Proceedings page 467.

† MSS. memoranda on label.

gentleman on the island of Ometepe, in Lake Nicaragua.* The La Palma specimen agrees minutely in coloration with the female from Ometepe, the only difference worth mentioning being the very slightly darker color of the pileum. In size it is somewhat less, though not so much so as the female from Jiménez, described above.

5. *Picolaptes gracilis*, Ridgw.†

A specimen (male) collected by Mr. Alfaro at Cobia de Salinas July 9, 1890 (No. 5085, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica), is much like the type of this supposed species, but has the ground color of the anterior upper parts (back included) browner, with the dusky streaks margining the pale median streaks quite obsolete on the back, these pale streaks being also more fulvous. The ground color of the under parts is also paler. The bill is exactly the same length, measured both from the nostril and from the base of the culmen, though it seems longer; but it is somewhat stouter, as well as less distinctly curved.

I have now little doubt that both these specimens are young birds of *P. compressus*, and not a distinct species.

6. *Scytalopus argentifrons*, sp. nov.

SP. CHAR: *Adult male* (No. 121329, U. S. National Museum, Volcan de Irazú, Costa Rica, April 23, 1891; Anastasio Alfaro): Forehead and anterior portion of crown silvery gray; ‡ hind neck, back, and scapulars dusky brownish slate-color; wings similar but a very little bit more brownish, the tertials having indistinct rusty terminal margins; lower back dusky brownish, changing to a more rusty brown on rump and upper tail-coverts—only the tips of the feathers thus colored, however, their entire concealed portion being uniform leaden slate-color; tail uniform dusky brownish slate, like wings. Head (except as already described) and under parts as far back as the belly, plain dull slate-color, paler, or in fact inclining to whitish, on middle of the belly and having a hoary or silvery cast about the head in certain lights; fluffy flank-feathers clear mummy brown, marked with rather broad curved bars of blackish; femoral and anal regions similar, but ground color paler (nearly cinnamon); under tail-coverts light tawny-brownish, indistinctly barred with dusky. Under surface of the wing plain dusky brownish gray, the edges of the remiges pale drab. Bill black; tarsi brownish black on outer side, light olive on inner side; toes light horn-color or olive. Length (skin), 4.30; wing, 2.15; tail 1.60; exposed culmen, .45; tarsus, .80; middle toe, .68.

* Cf. Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. VI, pp. 393, 394.

† Proc. U. S. Nat. Mus., Vol. XI, Sept. 20, 1889, p. 542.

‡ Unfortunately the whole hinder crown and occiput have been shot away; but another specimen (sex not determined) has these parts dull brownish, the feathers slaty on the basal portion.

Young (No. 121330,* Volcan de Irazú, May 1891; Anastasio Alfaro): Above dusky brown (nearly clove-brown), each feather with a more or less distinct subterminal \cap -shaped or semicircular bar of bistre or sepia brown, the rump and upper tail-coverts with more regular as well as much more distinct bars of a light tawny-brown; wings much browner than in the adult, the greater coverts and tertials with rather indistinct tawny-brown tips; chin and throat pale grayish, mixed with buff, passing laterally into uniform brownish gray on sides of neck and malar region; ear-coverts uniform slate dusky; chest dull brownish gray, the feathers of median portion indistinctly tipped with dull buffy grayish; breast and belly dusky, conspicuously squamated with buff; flanks, under tail-coverts, etc., as in the adult. Length (skin), 4.40; wing, 1.95; tail, 1.50; exposed culmen, .43; tarsus, .80; middle toe, .68.

Another adult (No. 5419, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, same locality, etc.), is essentially like the one described, its measurements being as follows: Length ("mummied" specimen), 4.25; wing, 2.05; tail, 1.48; exposed culmen, 0.45; tarsus, 0.80; middle toe, 0.68.

The only Colombian species with which I have been able to compare this are *S. griseicollis* (four specimens) and *S. analis* Lafr. It agrees with the latter in general style of coloration and in the very long and strong hind toe and claw, but is much smaller, has a slenderer bill, with less curved outlines, and is furthermore distinguished by the silvery luster to the plumage of the head, especially on the forehead.

The discovery of a species of this Antarctic and Andean family at a locality north of the Isthmus of Panama is a notable event, for the achievement of which Mr. Alfaro deserves congratulations.

7. *Chloronerpes caboti* (Malh.)?

An apparently immature male specimen differs from undoubted adults of *C. caboti* from both Costa Rica and Honduras in its generally darker and duller coloration. It may be described as follows:

Immature male (No. 5406, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Jiménez, C. R., March 28, 1891; Anastasio Alfaro): Above, plain greenish olive, brightest on the lower back, but nowhere approaching the bright tawny-olive of the adult; whole crown and occiput, superficially, red, as in the adult, but the color less bright; pale subauricular space much less distinct than in the adult; lower parts dull olive, altogether less bright and tawny or oleagineous than in the adult. "Bill black; iris dark brown; feet slate-gray." Length (skin), 6.20; wing, 3.30; tail, 1.82; culmen, .82; tarsus, .68.

8. *Trogon massena* Gould.

Two adult males, one from Pacuare (No. 1591, M. N. C. R., May, 1876, J. C. Zeledon), the other from Jiménez (No. 3948, M. N. C. R., December 24, 1889, George K. Cherrie), are remarkably different in the color-

* No. 5417, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica.

ing of the metallic portions of the plumage. The latter, which Mr. Cherrie writes is the common or prevailing type in Costa Rica, has no shade of blue anywhere, the tail and back being in fact decidedly bronzy, other portions (head, neck, chest, rump, and upper tail-coverts) being bright bronze-green. The other specimen has the green everywhere of a decided bluish cast, becoming almost blue on the rump, upper tail coverts, and hind-neck. There are apparently no other differences beyond those which may be attributed to ordinary individual variation. The two birds certainly look like distinct species, but on comparing a considerable series of specimens it is seen that they merely represent extreme variations of one bird, as the following will show:

No. 3948, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Jiménez, Costa Rica. Bronze-green, with back and middle rectrices bronze.

No. 3476, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, same locality. Bronze-green, with back more bronzy.

No. 1596, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Naranjo, Costa Rica. Bronze-green, the back more bronzy.

No. 1591, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Pacuare, Costa Rica. Bluish green, becoming greenish blue on rump, upper tail-coverts, and hind neck.

No. 34875, U. S. National Museum, Turrialba, Costa Rica. Pure green, tinged with bronze on scapulars.

No. 34896, U. S. National Museum, Angostura, Costa Rica. Bronze-green, upper tail-coverts abruptly bluish green, and scapulars mixed with bronze feathers.

No. 62086, U. S. National Museum, Veragua. Bronze-green, mixed with clear green on the rump.

No. 53978, U. S. National Museum, Panama. Clear green, becoming bronze-green on scapulars and across lower back.

No. 91276, U. S. National Museum, Los Sábalos, Nicaragua. Bronze-green, mixed with bronze on back and scapulars.

No. 120251, U. S. National Museum, San Pedro Sula, Honduras. Bronze, becoming bronze-green on head, rump, and upper tail-coverts.

No. 120252, U. S. National Museum, same locality. Similar to No. 120251, but a little greener.

No. 40457, U. S. National Museum, Greytown, Nicaragua. Clear, green, more bluish on head, scapulars mixed with bronze, back tinged with bluish green, and upper tail-coverts abruptly bluish green.

No. 50550, U. S. National Museum, Guatemala. Bronze-green, more bronzy on scapulars, clear green on head, and longer upper tail-coverts.

An adult female from Pozo Azul (No. 1592, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, December 1, 1885, J. C. Zeledon) differs remarkably from all others I have seen in having the entire bill black, the under mandible quite as uniform and deep black as the upper, instead of orange or orange-red (drying dull yellowish). An immature female (No. 43009, U. S. National

Museum, San Mateo, April, 1866, J. Cooper) has the lower mandible dusky brown, but showing a lightening of color at the tip and base.

A young male in transition plumage (No. 3476, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, Jiménez, August 18, 1883, A. Alfaro) may be described as follows: Pileum bright metallic grass-green; hind neck, back, and scapulars metallic olive-green or bronze; rump and upper tail coverts metallic grass-green; six middle tail feathers bronzy purplish black, their outer webs edged with bronze-green, this occupying nearly the entire outer web of the middle pair of rectrices, the inner webs of which have a copper-bronze luster in the proper light; three outermost pairs of rectrices black, tipped (for about .25-.30 of an inch) with white, and narrowly barred with white along the edge of the outer web (entirely across near the white terminal spot, and much more distinct, as well as extending much farther toward the base on the outermost feather). Secondaries dull slate-black, margined and irregularly barred with dull light buff. Breast and anterior portion of sides light ash-gray barred or undulated with darker. Upper mandible blackish, with basal half of cutting-edge orange.

9. *Trogon aurantiiventris* Gould.

A male from the Volcan de Irazú (No. 5529, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, May 21, 1891) and a female from Cartago (No. 5528, May 30, 1891) differ from all the specimens of *T. aurantiiventris* in the U. S. National Museum collection in the color of the under parts, which in the male is pure orange and in the female a pale orange, instead of saturn-red, reddish orange, or salmon-color. I am not able to detect any other differences, however.

10. *Accipiter subniger* (Vieill.).

= "*A. tinnus* (Lath.)," and "*A. superciliosus* (Linn.)."

An adult male from Greytown, Nicaragua (No. 5115, Museo Nacional de Costa Rica, June 15, 1890, Anastasio Alfaro), measures as follows: Length (skin), 8.50; wing, 5.15; tail, 3.90; culmen, 0.42; tarsus, 1.58 (unfeathered portion, 1.08); middle toe, 1.05. "Iris, crimson; bill, black; feet, cadmium yellow; soles of toes, Indian yellow." Four black bands on tail.